

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /157 W

----- 084542

P R 262104Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6661

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, SW, PFOR

SUBJ: ANOTHER SWEDISH INCIDENT BREAKS CALM

1. SUMMARY. RELATIVE PEACE BETWEEN SWEDISH EMBASSY AND GOC WAS BROKEN OVER WEEKEND BY ARREST OF URUGUAYAN ASYLEE IN HOSPITAL. END SUMMARY.
 2. MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS WHICH HAD BROUGHT SWEDISH EMBASSY-GOC RELATIONS TO BOILING POINT (SANTIAGO 5482) HAD CALMED DOWN TO SLOW SIMMER IN RECENT DAYS. FLAME UNDER POT WAS TURNED UP AGAIN, HOWEVER, WITH REVELATION OF WEEKEND EVENTS IN WHICH URUGUAYAN ASYLEE IN SWEDISH-PROTECTED CUBAN EMBASSY WAS ARRESTED AFTER HAVING BEEN BROUGHT TO NEARBY HOSPITAL BY SWEDISH AMBASSADOR EDELSTAM.
 3. ACCORDING TO WIRE SERVICE ACCOUNTS PUBLISHED IN NOV 26 CIVILEAN PRESS, SWEDISH AMBASSADOR EDELSTAM, ACCOMPANIED BY FRENCH COLLEAGUE PIERRE DE MENTHON, INVOLVED IN ALTERCATION WITH CHILEAN POLICE WHO ARRESTED URUGUAYAN CITIZEN CONSUELO ALONSO IN PRIVATE HOSPITAL DESPITE EDELSTAM'S PROTESTATIONS. EDELSTAM HAD TAKEN ALONSO FROM CUBAN EMBASSY WHERE
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SHE RESIDING IN ASYLUM STATUS TO HOSPITAL FOR MEDICAL ATTEN-

TION AND CLAIMED THAT WHILE THERE SHE REMAINED UNDER HIS DIPLOMATIC PROTECTION. CHILEAN POLICE OBVIOUSLY DISAGREED AND ARRESTED ALONSO, WHICH ENGENDERED FIGHT BETWEEN DIPLOMATS AND POLICE, (SOME PRESS ACCOUNTS SUGGEST DISPUTE MAY HAVE BEEN PHYSICAL AS WELL AS VERBAL).

4. IN NOV 25 CONVERSATION WITH EMOFF, SWEDISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL CONFIRMED WIRE SERVICE REPORTS THAT EDELSTAM HAD RECEIVED MILITARY PERMISSION TO MAKE TRANSFER. (FROM CONTEXT OF SWEDES REMARKS IT APPEARS PERMISSION WAS GRANTED VERBALLY.) ACCORDING TO SAME SOURCE ALONSO WHO WAS HEMORRHAGING HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO HOSPITAL AND OPERATED UPON ON FRIDAY, AND THAT WHEN EDELSTAM LEARNED ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON THAT POLICE PREPARING TO REMOVE HER TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL UNDER ARREST HE PHYSICALLY INTERVENED. TUG OF WAR THEN ENSUED BETWEEN TEAMS COMPOSED OF EDELSTAM AND SWEDES ON ONE SIDE AND CHILEAN POLICE ON THE OTHER. UNFORTUNATE, PROSTATE MISS ALONSO AND HER STRETCHER PLAYED PART OF ROPE IN THIS MATCH, WHICH CHILEAN WON. SWEDISH EMOFF DID NOT RPT NOT MENTION THAT EDELSTAM HAD BEEN STRUCK DURING FRAY BUT DID CHARACTERIZE INCIDENT AS MOST SERIOUS YET BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

5. GOC DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL TOBIAS BARROS APPEARED ON POPULAR SUNDAY EVENING TALK SHOW TO PRESENT GOVT'S SIDE OF STORY. BARROS ASSERTED THAT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS HAD GIVEN PERMISSION ON NUMBER OF OCCASIONS TO EMBASSIES TO TRANSFER INDIVIDUALS TO HOSPITALS UNDER DIPLOMATIC PROTECTION AND TO THUS MAINTAIN STATUS OF ASYLEES. BARROS CLAIMED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED NO SUCH REQUEST FROM SWEDES TO TRANSFER ALONSO WHO HE IDENTIFIED AS A "TUPAMARO" AND POINTEDLY NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH EDELSTAM HAD APPARENTLY HAD TIME TO CONTACT DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES AND PRESS HE HAD NOT TAKEN OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST APPROPRIATE GOC AUTHORIZATION.

6. NOV 26 AFTERNOON PRESS QUOTES BARROS TO EFFECT THAT SWEDES HAD MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT AN EMERGENCY SAFE-CONDUCT TRANSFERRAL TO A HOSPITAL ON THURSDAY, AND WERE TOLD THAT ISSUANCE OF SUCH WAS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, BARROS ADDED, SWEDES NEVER RETURNED TO MAKE FORMAL REQUEST. BARROS ALSO REPORTED AS STATING THAT EDELSTAM HAD APPARENTLY TRANSFERRED ALONSO UNDER PERMISSION AND ESCORT OF MILITARY GUARDS PATROLLING NEAR EX-CUBAN EMBASSY.

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7. BARROS DUCKED SHARP QUESTIONS FROM SUNDAY EVENING PANELISTS WHO WANTED TO KNOW WHY EDELSTAM HAD NOT YET BEEN DECLARED PERSONA NON GRATA. IN SOMEWHAT HALF-HEARTED DEFENSE OF AMBASSADOR, BARROS CONTENDED THAT PUBLIC SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT EDELSTAM VIEWS HIMSELF AS WELL-INTENTIONED GARY COOPER-TYPE FIGURE: "A COWBOY AT THE LAST RODEO."

8. SOURCE AT FOREIGN MINISTRY CONFIRMED TO EMOFF THIS MORNING

THAT SWEDISH AMB HAD NOT REQUESTED PERMISSION FROM THAT MINISTRY TO TAKE ALONSO TO CLINIC. SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THAT SHE STILL UNDER ARREST BUT IN ANOTHER HOSPITAL. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL SEND CIRCULAR NOTE TO ALL EMBASSIES LATE THIS AFTERNOON OR TOMORROW CONCERNING LATEST INCIDENT.

9. COMMENT. BARROS APPEARED GENUINELY DISTURBED BY DEVELOPMENTS. IN ALL PROBABILITY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS WOULD HAVE GRANTED PERMISSION TO TRANSFER ALONSO TO HOSPITAL IF SWEDES HAD FORMALLY REQUESTED IT. DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE AT THIS TIME WHETHER POLICE ACTED ON OWN OR WITH SPECIFIC ORDERS FROM SOME ELEMENT OF GOC WITH OR WITHOUT CONSENT OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS. INCIDENT MUST ALSO BE VIEWED IN LIGHT OF FACT THAT ONE ELEMENT OF ONGOING GOC-SWEDISH EMBASSY BATTLE HAS BEEN EDELSTAM'S REPORTED ATTEMPTS TO END-RUN MINFON RELS AND DEAL DIRECTLY WITH MILITARY AUTHORITIES. TO DATE, GOC HAS CHOSEN NOT TO PNG EDELSTAM THOUGH MANY IN GOVT FEEL GOC HAS LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO DO SO. GOC DECISION BASED ON REALIZATION THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD FURTHER DAMAGE ITS ALREADY WEAK INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. THIS POLICY LINE NO DOUBT BEING REEVALUATED IN WAKE OF LATEST INCIDENT.

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